
May 2025



**LOCAL AND NATIONAL
ACTORS SPEAK OUT
ON THE FUTURE OF
THE HUMANITARIAN
SYSTEM:**

**Localisation and People-Centred
Approaches Global Survey Results**

Executive Summary

At the request of Tom Fletcher, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), the co-chairs of the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG), Ted Chaiban from UNICEF and Gabriella Wajman from Save the Children, were tasked with proposing recommendations to simplify and streamline the clusters.¹ Several work streams were established to support this process, and the cluster reform process falls under Workstream 9 (Figure 7). To facilitate the participation of local and national actors (LNAs²) in the Humanitarian Reset reform process, the Workstream 9-Working Group (WG) 1, focused on Localisation and a People-centred Approach, conducted an online survey with both open and ranked questions to active LNA cluster members globally. **A total of 1,046 LNA representatives**, including 22 government representatives from 18 countries, invested more than **1,000 hours** making their voices heard between 17th and 28th April 2025. Viewpoints came from LNAs in 41 different countries, including 22 government representatives from 18 countries.

The survey included open and ranking questions, aimed at gathering the views of LNAs on the humanitarian reset process from a localisation perspective. From the analysis of the survey, community engagement and locally-led humanitarian action were the strongest themes from the quantitative and qualitative results, across all regions and organisation types. These were followed closely by the desire for a data-driven system and by direct and quality funding to LNAs. The results highlight that the Humanitarian Reset should be driven and shaped by the concerns and priorities of LNAs because they know their communities best and can truly position them at the centre of the humanitarian system. As one survey respondent put it, “Inclusion by design, not as an afterthought”.

LNAs ranked thematic results

Rank	Localisation	People-centred	Humanitarian Reset Engagement
1	Require LNA leadership in coordination and action	Local community engagement	Represented by an LNA network at global level
2	LNAs co-lead monitoring the Humanitarian Reset	System-strengthening	FGDs among LNAs with Humanitarian Reset Team at global level
3	LNAs primary CBPF recipients	Locally-led cash responses	FGDs among LNAs with HCTs at country level
4	Reduce Inequalities in Partnerships	Common feedback mechanisms	Survey
5	Time-bound cluster activation and transition	Multi-sectoral planning	
6	Mandate inclusion of local organisations in decision-making	People-centred indicators	
7	LNA-led area-based coordination		

¹ For the purposes of this report, the term ‘cluster’ should be understood to include AoRs and sectors where relevant.

² IASC definition: 1) National and sub-national state actors who are state authorities of the affected aid recipient country engaged in relief, whether at local or national level and 2) Local and national non-state actors who are organizations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO

Transformational Ideas from Local and National Actors on the Humanitarian Reform

This survey included open questions asking LNAs to share their views on highlighting what were the most transformational ideas for reforming the humanitarian system. On analysis, below are the four breakthrough ideas aligned with the survey themes that received the most collective consensus on Localisation and People-centred Approaches:

1. **Community Engagement-** Establish Community-Led Humanitarian Hubs. These decentralised, locally-led coordination hubs that include representatives from affected communities, marginalised groups, and civil society that lead on needs assessments, response, and feedback.
2. **Local Leadership-** Humanitarian response that is led by LNAs as decision-makers and direct implementers, with enforced targets and tracking. A minimum of 50% of seats on the HCT (and other decision-making bodies) should be held by LNAs.
3. **Data Driven-** Create and fund multi-sectoral data collection platforms that inform the response and enable two-way accountability to the affected communities. Multi-sectoral community-led Needs assessments and feedback mechanisms should be multi-sectoral and community-led.
4. **Ring-Fenced Funding-** More direct funding should be ring-fenced for LNAs with increased flexibility. All (100%) of Regional and Country-based Pooled Funding (CBPF) should go exclusively and directly to LNAs, including the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) fund, which should be made accessible to the LNAs.

Broader Learning for the Humanitarian Reset

Whilst this survey was aimed at gathering feedback from active LNA cluster members to inform the work of WG 1 and consequently the cluster reform process, there are wider learnings analysed from the survey. Humanitarian clusters are just one of ten different work streams that make up the humanitarian reset process.

With the initial phase of the humanitarian reset process coming to a close, the next phase plans to engage a wide range of stakeholders to consult and operationalise the transformational ideas that have been generated by the Working Groups. It is imperative that subsequent phases include and consult with LNAs in a meaningful manner, the ten humanitarian reset workstreams. This sentiment was echoed by the majority of the 1,046 LNA respondents and captured by one who asserted that every humanitarian reset group should have “an LNA co-chair and multiple LNA members, with equal speaking and decision-making authority.” For the humanitarian reset process to be truly transformational, LNAs in collaboration with affected communities must decide how the system works best to support them.

The cluster reform process sought the opinions of LNAs and they; responded clearly and boldly. LNAs need to be heard, and their perspectives should be used to inform the decision-making across the reform process so that local voices inform the changes to the humanitarian system for truly more people-centred and locally-led humanitarian action. Localisation does not and should not happen in the absence of LNAs.

“Build humanitarian action together, from the start. Local actors no longer want to be simple guests at the decision-making table – they want to be co-architects.” - LNA Survey Respondent



1 Introduction

At the request of Tom Fletcher, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), the co-chairs of the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG), Ted Chaiban from UNICEF and Gabriella Waijman from Save the Children, were tasked with proposing recommendations to simplify and streamline the clusters.³ Several work streams were established to support this process, and the cluster reform process falls under Workstream 9 (Figure 7). To facilitate the participation of local and national actors (LNAs) in the Humanitarian Reset reform process, the Workstream 9 - WG 1, focused on Localisation and a People-centred Approach, conducted an online survey with both open and ranked questions to active LNA cluster members globally. Survey results were analysed and presented to the WG 1 members for their consideration when developing the transformational ideas and subsequently shared at the session for all 4 Working Groups hosted by the OPAG co-chairs sessions in May 2025.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data Collection

Purposive sampling was applied for data collection, targeting active local and national humanitarian cluster members globally. No identifying information was collected in order to protect the anonymity of respondents. The survey was composed of ten questions (Q1-Q10) that were either multiple choice, ranking pre-set concepts, or open, as presented in Annex 1. The open-form text-based responses were especially important for hearing innovative ideas from respondents. The ranked questions asked responders to rank innovative ideas (1-n) for both Localisation and a People-Centred Approach, based on which ideas they thought would be the “most transformational to the humanitarian system.” They also ranked their preferred modality for engagement in the Humanitarian Reset. The pre-set innovative ideas in the ranking questions were drawn from the initial discussions by the WG 1 and triangulated with opinion pieces and papers written by LNAs, as presented in Annex 2, to ensure that these ideas reflected genuine ideas coming from local voices. For each area, Localisation and People-Centred Approaches in humanitarian coordination, the survey included an open question to ensure that alternative transformational ideas were documented. To increase accessibility, the survey was translated from English into Arabic, French, Spanish, and Ukrainian using Google Translate and reviewed by native speakers.

2.2 Data Cleaning

The final dataset for analysis was downloaded at 11:52am Geneva time on April 29th 2025. This raw dataset included 1,089 responses.

Most actors operating across numerous countries would be considered international actors. Responses were excluded if they answered Q2 (country/context of operation), indicating that their organisation works across multiple countries. Examples: “more than 80 countries, including Ukraine” or “All countries in Americas and the Caribbean”. Ten responses were excluded based on this criterion.

Most organisations headquartered in Europe, North America, or Australia/New Zealand operating in a humanitarian setting would be considered international actors per IASC definitions. Working from the assumption that some representatives of international actors may have completed the form, responses that answered Q1 with “Europe” or “Other” (assuming “Other” most likely indicates North America or Australia) and Q2 with a country other than “Ukraine” or “Türkiye” (that could be considered to be in Europe or Eastern Europe) were excluded from the analysis. Thirty-three responses were excluded based on this criterion.

In total, 43 observations (3.9%) were excluded from the analysis based on this exclusion process.

In total, 1,046 observations were retained for analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

All analyses were conducted using Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics, including the region, country, and type of organisation, were summarised as percentages (Q1-Q4).

The number of clusters or AoRs engaged with (Q5) was averaged.

Rankings (Q6, Q7, and Q9) were weighted in reverse order for ease of generating graphs. For example, in the case of localisation with 7 aspects to rank, where an aspect was ranked 1st, it was weighted as 7 points, and where an aspect was ranked 7th, it was weighted as 1 point.

Open questions (Q8 and Q10) responses that were submitted in a language other than English were translated into English using the Microsoft Excel Google Translate Function. Once in English, responses were analysed by applying a thematic analysis to interpret patterns across responses. Emerging themes were color-coded, and the frequency of theme mentions were counted using the Microsoft Excel Function by Color Add-on. The most frequently mentioned themes were interpreted as indicating consensus among LNAs and were focused on for identifying transformational ideas.

Results were further disaggregated by subgroups of the data as needed.

2.4 Limitations

There was no LNA representation among the Humanitarian Reset WG 1 or on the team that created the survey and conducted the data analysis of the results. LNA perspectives would have been valuable to support the interpretation of the survey results and synthesis of this report. The survey results were shared with the Humanitarian Reset WG 1, but it is not possible to attribute how much influence they had on the ideas that the WG 1 generated.

Some terminology included in the questionnaire, such as area-based coordination (ABC) and people-centred approaches, are relatively new terms that are not well defined and therefore may have been challenging for respondents to assess.

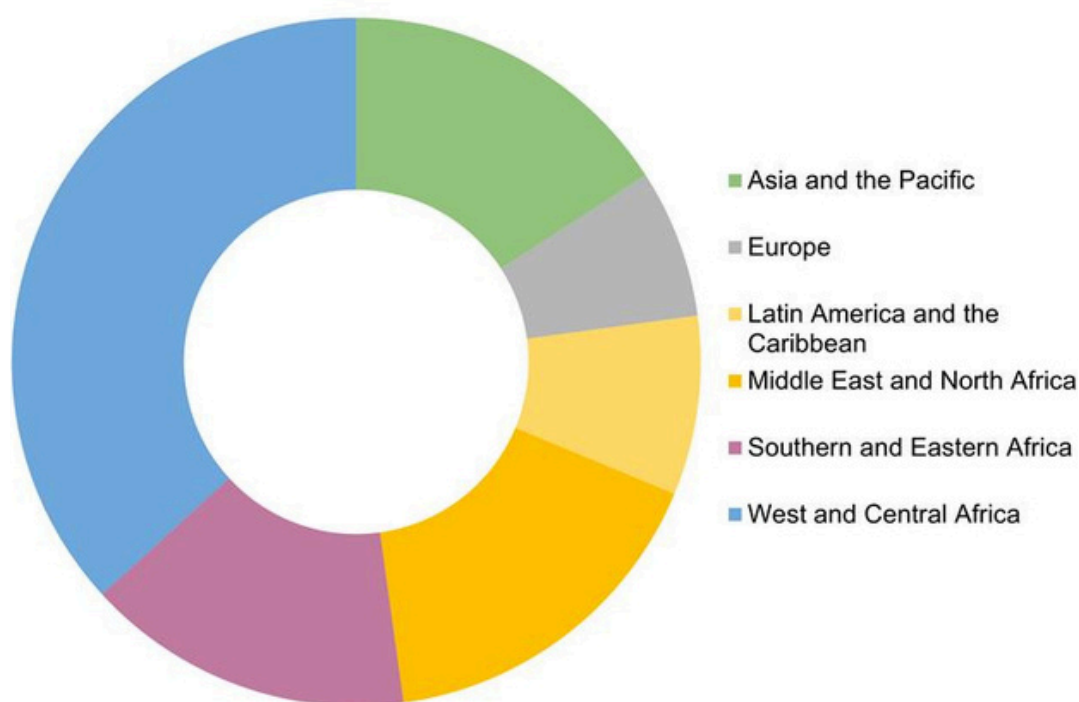
Ranked results provide insight on which approaches LNAs found to be most transformational, but did not provide insights on the “why” behind the selection. Understanding this would require further qualitative exploration, such as through Focus Group Discussions.

3 Findings

3.1 Survey Respondents

One thousand and forty-six LNA representatives invested more than 1,000 hours making their voices heard. The respondents operate in 41 countries across all regions with humanitarian contexts (Figure 1). The largest number of responses were from West and Central Africa (36.8%) and the Middle East and North Africa (16.5%). The smallest number of responses were from Europe³ (7.0%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (8.4%).

Figure 1. Regional Distribution of Respondents



The majority of surveys were completed in English (52%), with the remainder completed in French (29%), Arabic (8%), Ukrainian (6%), and Spanish (5%).

Twenty-two representatives of government ministries from 18 countries and 9 representatives of national Red Cross/Red Crescent from 8 countries completed the survey. There was strong representation from women-led organisations (35%) and youth-led organisations (26%).

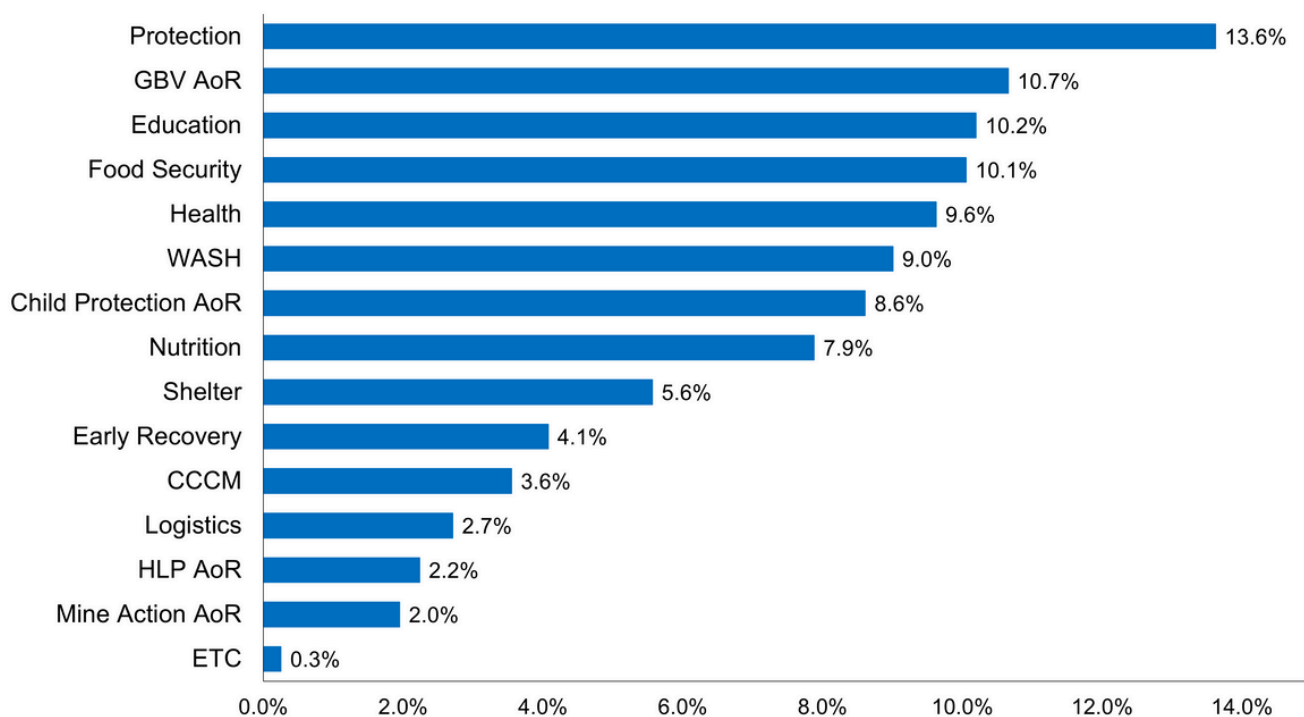
3. Respondents operating in Europe were either in Ukraine or Türkiye.

Table 1. Survey Respondents by Type of Organisation

Type of organisation	n	%
Local or national government	22	2%
National Red Cross / Red Crescent	9	1%
Women-led Organisation (WLO)	353	35%
Youth-led Organisation (YLO)	262	26%
Organisation of Persons with Disabilities (OPD)	30	3%

Respondents most frequently reported their organisation being members of their Protection Cluster, Gender-based Violence (GBV) Area of Responsibility (AoR), Education Cluster, or Food Security Cluster. They were less frequently members of their Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), Housing Land and Property (HLP) AoR, or Logistics Cluster. On average, responding organisations were actively engaging in 6 clusters.

Figure 2. Proportion of Responding Organisations Active in Respective Clusters/AoRs

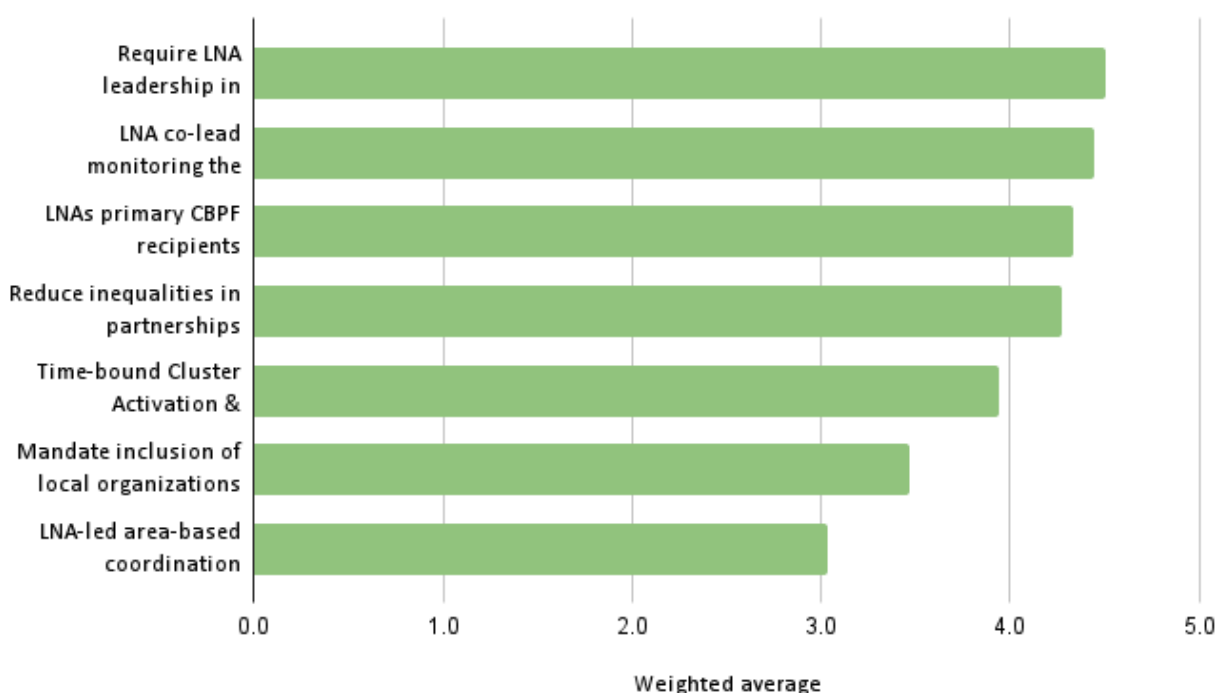


3.2 Ranking Transformational Ideas for Localisation

Across all 1,046 respondents, requiring LNA leadership in coordination and humanitarian action, and LNA co-leading the monitoring of the Humanitarian Reset process were ranked highest. This was followed by increasing direct funding to LNAs through CBPF and reducing inequality in partnerships. The lowest-ranked approaches overall were LNA-led area-based coordination (ABC), mandating the inclusion of local organisations in decision-making mechanisms, and time-bound cluster activation and transition planning.

It is important to highlight that all the options presented, as depicted in the graph, received rankings exceeding a score of 3 out of 5, underscoring the significance and relevance of each option in the overall assessment.

Figure 3. Ranked Transformational Ideas for Localisation among All Respondents



Ranked results were further disaggregated to explore regional variation. Respondents from Europe and West and Central Africa ranked reducing inequality in partnerships as the most transformational idea, while respondents from Eastern and Southern Africa ranked CBPFs being primarily for LNAs as the most transformational idea for localisation. LNA-led ABC was consistently ranked sixth or seventh across regions.

“Deepen listening and meaningful participation of communities: It is necessary to move towards a truly people-centered approach, which promotes continuous processes of active listening and co-creation with affected communities.” - LNA Survey Respondent

Table 2. Ranked Transformational Ideas for Localisation by Region

Approach	Asia and the Pacific (n=166)	Eastern and Southern Africa (n=161)	Europe (n=73)	Latin America and the Caribbean (n=88)	Middle East and North Africa (n=173)	West and Central Africa (n=385)
Require LNA leadership in coordination and action	1	2	5	1	1	2
LNAs co-lead monitoring the Humanitarian Reset	2	3	3	2	3	3
LNAs' primary CBPF recipients	3	1	2	4	4	3
Reduce Inequalities in Partnerships	5	4	1	3	5	1
Time-bound cluster activation and transition	4	5	7	7	2	5
Mandate inclusion of local organisations in decision-making	6	6	3	5	6	6
LNA-led area-based coordination	7	7	6	6	7	7

Ranked results were further disaggregated to explore organisational variation. Respondents representing Women Led Organisations (WLOs) ranked reducing inequalities in partnerships as the most transformational idea and local or national government ranked it second, while organisations operating in countries with area-based coordination ranked LNAs being the primary recipients of CBPFs as most transformational. LNA-led ABC was ranked seventh across organisations.

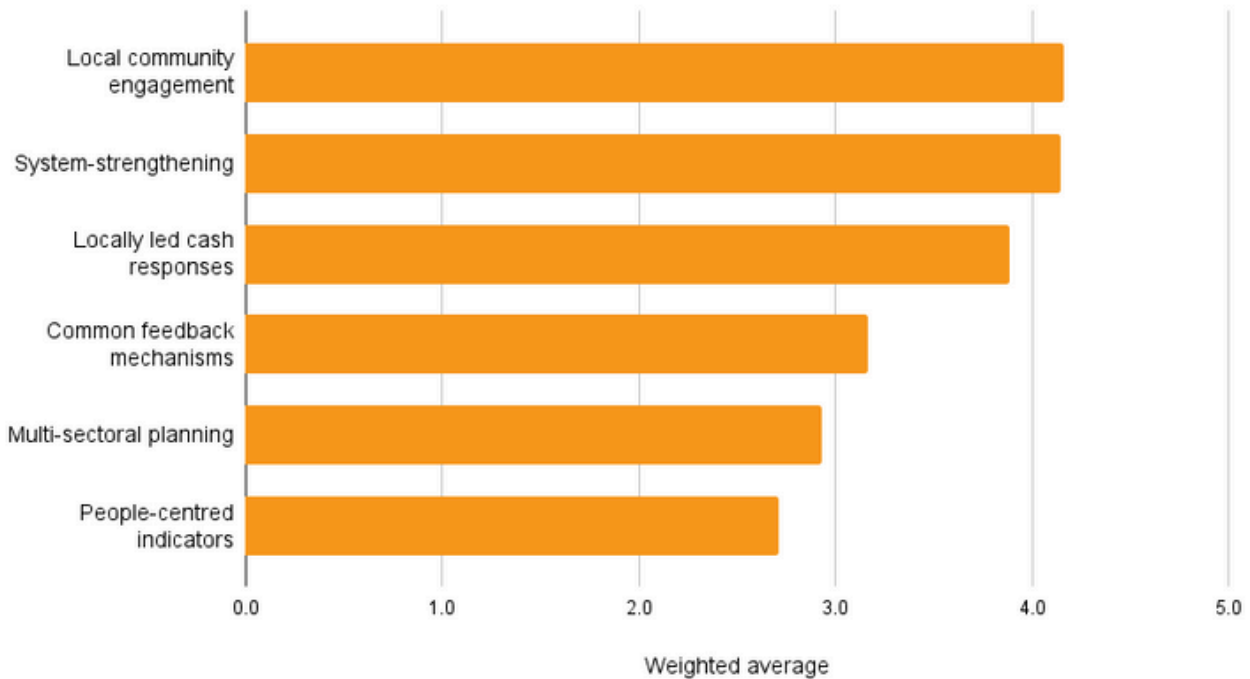
Table 3. Ranked Transformational Ideas for Localisation by Organisations

Approach	Local or national government (n=22)	Women-led organisations (n=353)	Youth-led organisations (n=262)	Organisations of persons with disabilities (n=30)	Organisations in countries with area-based coordination ⁴ (n=155)
Require LNA leadership in coordination and action	1	4	1	1	2
LNAs co-lead monitoring the Humanitarian Reset	6	3	3	3	3
LNAs primary CBPF recipients	3	2	2	4	1
Reduce Inequalities in Partnerships	2	1	4	5	4
Time-bound cluster activation and transition	5	6	5	2	5
Mandate inclusion of local organisations in decision-making	4	5	6	6	6
LNA-led area-based coordination	7	7	7	7	7

3.3. Ranking Transformational Ideas for People-centred Approaches

Across all 1,046 respondents, local community engagement and system-strengthening were ranked highest and nearly tied for first ranking, followed by locally-led cash responses. The lowest ranked approach was developing common people-centred indicators, followed by multi-sectoral planning and having common feedback mechanisms.

Figure 4. Ranked Transformational Ideas for People-centred Approaches among All Respondents



Ranked results were further disaggregated to explore regional variation. Respondents from Asia and the Pacific ranked locally-led cash responses as most transformational, while in the Middle East and North Africa, systems-strengthening was ranked first. Multi-sectoral planning ranked higher for Europe than other regions. All regions ranked defining people-centred indicators as fifth or sixth (last).

“It is urgent to flatten the asymmetries between international agencies and national, local and women-led organizations. This implies including their networks and platforms in decision-making spaces with equal voice and vote, and guaranteeing their direct access to flexible and sustained financing.” - LNA Survey Respondent

Table 4. Ranked Transformational Ideas for People-centred Approaches by Region

Approach	Asia and the Pacific (n=166)	Eastern and Southern Africa (n=161)	Europe (n=73)	Latin America and the Caribbean (n=88)	Middle East and North Africa (n=173)	West and Central Africa (n=385)
Local community engagement	3	1	1	1	3	1
System-strengthening	2	3	2	2	1	2
Locally-led cash responses	1	2	4	3	2	3
Common feedback mechanisms	4	4	6	4	4	4
Multi-sectoral planning	5	5	3	5	5	5
People-centred indicators	6	6	5	6	6	6

Ranked results were further disaggregated to explore organisational variation. Respondents representing local or national government and OPDs ranked system-strengthening first, while local community engagement was ranked first by WLOs and YLOs. All organisation types ranked defining people-centred indicators as fifth or sixth (last).

Table 5. Ranked Transformational Ideas for Localisation by Organisations

Approach	Local or national government (n=22)	Women-led organisations (n=353)	Youth-led organisations (n=262)	Organisations of persons with disabilities (n=30)
Local community engagement	3	1	1	3
System-strengthening	1	2	2	1
Locally-led cash responses	2	3	3	2
Common feedback mechanisms	4	4	4	4
Multi-sectoral planning	5	5	5	6
People-centred indicators	6	6	6	5

3.4. Enhancing the Humanitarian System to Ensure Safe, Inclusive, Localised, and Needs-Based Assistance for Affected Populations

Across the 1,046 respondents, 1,147 suggestions for how the humanitarian system could do better to ensure the multisectoral needs of affected people were analysed. The most frequent theme was around community engagement (324), including community consultation, participatory approaches and community leadership. The second most frequent theme was locally-driven response (285) followed by suggestions to ensure a data-driven humanitarian system (280). Some of the less frequently mentioned themes included cash programming (10) the nexus approach (10), and people-centred approaches (17).

Table 6. Humanitarian System Thematic Analysis Frequencies

N	Identified theme	Included concepts	Frequency
1	Community engagement	Community consultation, participatory approaches, and community leadership	324
2	Locally-driven response	LNA leadership, decision-making, equitable partnerships, and shifting power to LNAs	285
3	Data-driven	Evidence, indicators, information systems, assessments, and needs assessments	280
4	Funding	Flexible, longer-term, direct funding, pooled funding, and financing support	182
5	Multi-sectorality	-	166
6	Capacity strengthening	Capacity strengthening, capacity exchange	127
7	Feedback mechanisms	-	120
8	Gender	Women-led	115
9	Coordination	Area-based coordination	99
10	Disability	-	48
11	Accountability	-	47
12	Marginalised groups	Minority, displaced, stateless	35
13	Protection	-	30
14	People-centred	-	17
15	Nexus	Resilience	10
15	Cash	-	10

The identified themes that were most frequently mentioned among survey respondents were considered an indication of consensus across LNAs. The top five most frequent themes of community engagement, locally-led response, data-driven, funding, and multi-sectorality were further explored to summarise what was being said across responses as well as pulling out the boldest ideas being put forth that related to one or more of these themes.

Table 7. Exploring the Top 5 Most Frequent Themes

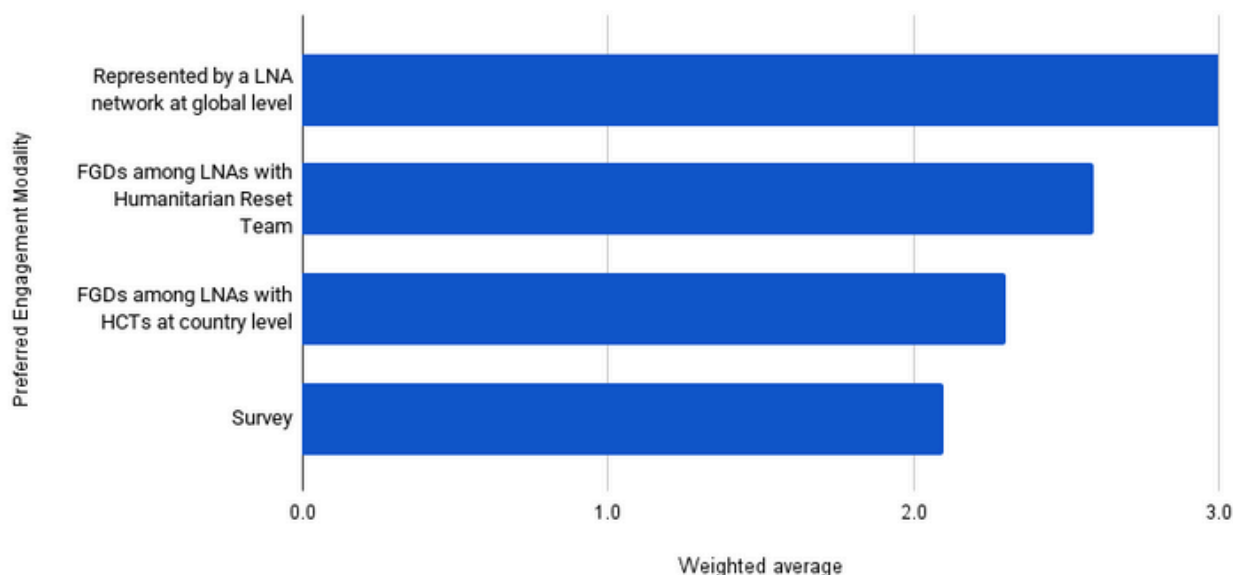
N	Identified theme	Summary of responses	Bold Ideas in Their Own Words
1	Community engagement	<p>Shift from focusing and relying on external “experts” to centring and listening deeply to members of the affected population. Community engagement and co-creation from day one and throughout the process, from assessing their own needs and priorities to programme design and evaluation, applying participatory approaches, regular consultation, ongoing dialogue, and robust feedback mechanisms.</p>	<p>1. Community-led participatory evaluations Replace traditional surveys with processes led by local leaders, grassroots organisations, and marginalised groups (women, disabled, Indigenous). Use visual methodologies, narratives, or community workshops to capture cross-sector needs (e.g., “How does the lack of water affect your safety or mental health?”)</p> <p>2. Establish Community-Led Humanitarian Hubs: Create decentralised, locally managed coordination hubs that include representatives from affected communities, women, youth, persons with disabilities, and local civil society organisations. These hubs should lead needs assessments, feedback collection, and response prioritisation to ensure assistance is people-centred, inclusive, and relevant to the actual needs on the ground</p> <p>3. Build systems based on local institutions, and not parallel to them</p> <p>4. Inclusive and Balanced Engagement Across All Tiers The humanitarian system should be restructured to ensure inclusive and balanced engagement of actors at all levels—national, sub-national, and local. A comprehensive mapping and classification of stakeholders is essential, considering their access, capacity, and financial resources. This approach would enable more strategic and equitable partnerships that reflect the realities and strengths of each actor within the response ecosystem.</p>
2	Locally-driven response	<p>Local and national actors centre communities and lead the humanitarian response anchored in their local expertise. They are coordinators, decision-makers, and implementers who directly engage with all stakeholders, from the community to donors. Where there are partnerships, they are equal.</p>	<p>5. Empower Representative Networks of Local and National Actors. Support and recognise local and national actor networks to co-lead strategic planning and coordination across sectors. This ensures representation of diverse local voices, fosters trust, and promotes power-sharing in decision-making that reflects community priorities.</p> <p>6. Empower Local Actors as Equal Partners Shift from viewing local organisations and community leaders as implementers to treating them as co-designers and decision-makers.</p> <p>7. Overcome power inequalities in the humanitarian system It is urgent to flatten the asymmetries between international agencies and national, local and women-led organisations. This implies including their networks and platforms in decision-making spaces with equal voice and vote, and guaranteeing their direct access to flexible and sustained financing.</p>

N	Identified theme	Summary of responses	Bold Ideas in Their Own Words
3	Data-driven	LNAs want a data-driven response that ensures real-time disaggregated data collection, robust feedback mechanisms and M&E, data sharing, and data protection. Engage communities in defining their own needs through robust needs assessments.	<p>8. International NGOs should be given a specific theme or program instead of doing everything that is beyond their capacity and causing resource inefficiencies</p> <p>9. Enabling Compliance Pathways for Local NGOs Compliance requirements should not serve as a default exclusion criterion for local actors. Instead, a dedicated and proportional compliance support mechanism should be established to enable local NGOs to meet requirements aligned with their funding levels and operational capacities. This would allow them to meaningfully contribute to the response and grow into stronger, more accountable partners over time.</p>
4	Funding	Direct, multi-year, flexible, predictable funding, with country-based pooled funds being reserved for LNAs. Reform funding to cultivate more trust and co-create reporting mechanisms. Shift away from primarily funding LNAs through INGOs.	<p>10. Integrate Real-Time, Multisectoral Data Platforms Develop and fund interoperable data platforms that collect, analyse, and visualise multi-sectoral needs in real time through mobile surveys, AI-assisted analysis, and community reporting. This ensures early identification of emerging vulnerabilities and more adaptive, evidence-based programming.</p> <p>11. Pooled funding for localised consortia (including local NGOs and authorities)</p> <p>12. CBPF 100% to be for LNNGOs and 50% of HCT seats to LNNGOs</p>
5	Multi-sectorality	Collaborative, integrated responses that share data platforms and conduct joint analyses that break silos and reduce duplications for a coherent response. Promote area-based response models that allow for cross-sectoral collaboration and localised planning tailored to specific geographic and social contexts. This multi-sectoral approach should empower local systems instead of bypassing them.	<p>13. Strengthening multi-sectoral coordination By establishing joint platforms that bring together humanitarian, governmental, and local agencies to analyse data and identify gaps proactively, ensuring comprehensive coverage of needs (such as health, education, shelter, protection) and others to avoid duplication of service.</p> <p>14. Area-based, multi-sectoral planning: Shift from siloed, sector-by-sector responses to area-based approaches anchored in local expertise. This approach better aligns with the intersecting needs of communities, enables flexible programming, and respects local realities and coping mechanisms.</p> <p>15. Reduce the number of clusters for the comprehensive design of multisectoral responses and reduce work in silos For example: Shelter, Logistics, Telecommunications represent support actions to ensure the quality of the responses. Protection, including GBV and children, should be transversal advisors to the attention of basic needs such as: Health, Nutrition, Education, WASH, and Food Security</p>

3.5. Preferred Engagement of Local and National Actors in the Humanitarian Reset Process

LNAs were asked to rank their preferred modality for involvement in the Humanitarian Reset. The highest ranked approach was being represented by an LNA network at the global level, followed by having the Humanitarian Reset Team conduct focus group discussions (FGDs) among LNAs at global level. The lowest ranked modalities was engagement through survey followed by having HCTs conduct FGDs with LNAs at country level.

Figure 5. Ranked Preference for Engagement in the Humanitarian Reset Process



Ranked results were further disaggregated to explore organisational variation. Responses by organisation followed a similar theme to the overall results, with the exception of OPDs ranking engagement through a survey as third instead of fourth.

Table 8. Ranked Preferred Engagement by Organisations

Approach	Local or national government (n=22)	Women-led organisations (n=353)	Youth-led organisations (n=262)	Organisations of persons with disabilities (n=30)
Represented by an LNA network at the global level	1	1	1	1
FGDs among LNAs with the Humanitarian Reset Team	2	2	2	2
FGDs among LNAs with HCTs at the country level	3	3	3	4
Survey	4	4	4	3

“Inclusion by design, not as an afterthought” - LNA Survey Respondent

4 Conclusion

Over 12 days, 1,046 LNA representatives from 41 countries, including 22 government representatives from 18 countries, invested more than 1,000 hours into making their voices heard. The Humanitarian Reset process asked LNAs for their opinions and they have clearly spoken. Their ideas should be heard to inform both decision-making and how this process continues to engage local voices to change the humanitarian system to be more people-centred and locally-led.

Community engagement and locally-led humanitarian action were the strongest themes from the quantitative and qualitative results, across all regions and organisation types. These were followed closely by the desire for a data-driven system and direct and quality funding to LNAs. The results also highlight that whatever changes and processes come out from this Humanitarian Reset, they should be driven and shaped by the concerns and priorities of LNAs because they know their communities best and can truly position them at the centre of the humanitarian system. As one survey respondent put it, “Inclusion by design, not as an afterthought”.

These findings were presented both to the OPAG Co-Chairs and the Working Group 1- Localisation and People-centred Approach responsible for formulating the transformational ideas. This presentation is linked in **Annex 3**.

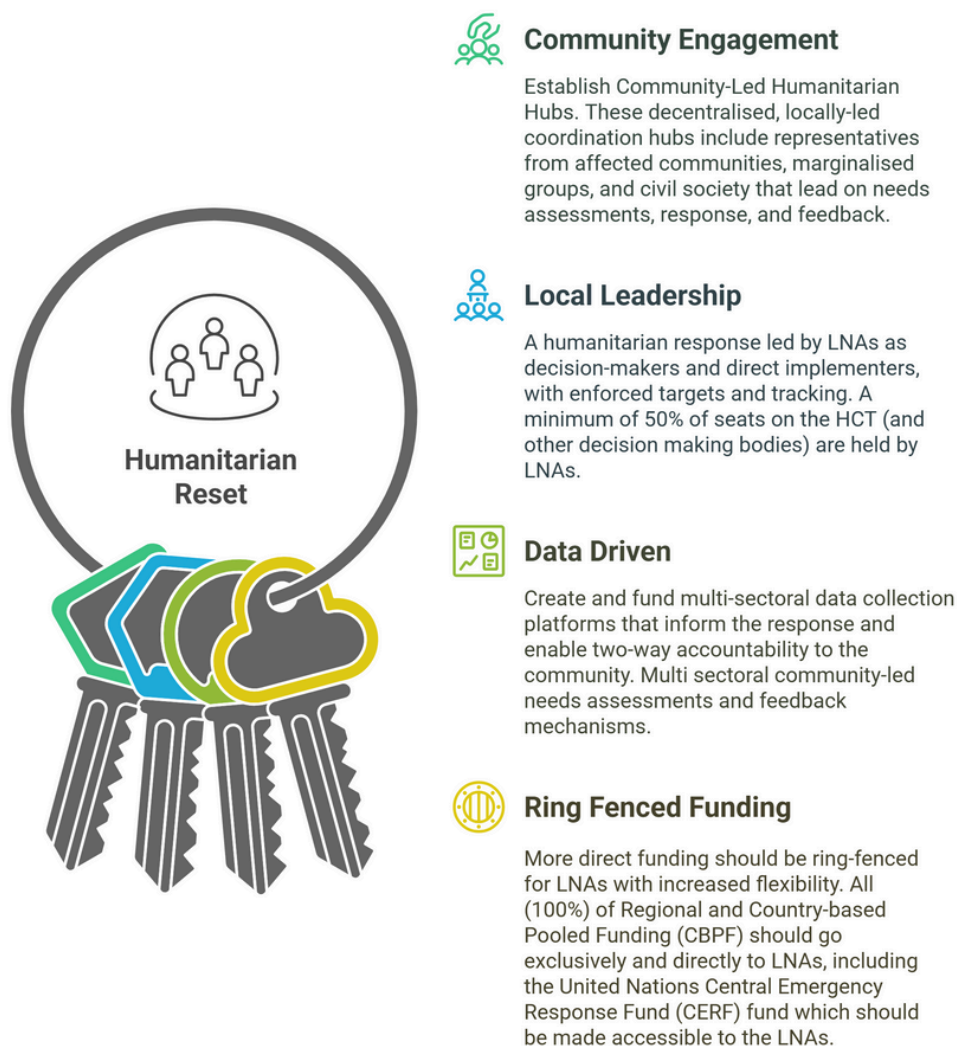
“The Humanitarian Reset is a key opportunity to correct historical imbalances in the system and reconfigure the architecture of the response from dignity, equity and justice. Listening to and protecting those on the front lines—communities and their organisations—must be the starting point.” - LNA Survey Respondent

4.1 Open Results- Bold Ideas from Local and National Actors

This survey openly asked LNAs to highlight what the most transformational ideas were to reform the humanitarian system. These are the four breakthrough ideas aligned with the themes that received the most collective consensus on Localisation and People-centred Approaches:

- 1. Community Engagement-** Establish Community-Led Humanitarian Hubs. These decentralised, locally-led coordination hubs include representatives from affected communities, marginalised groups, and civil society that lead on needs assessments, response, and feedback.
- 2. Local Leadership-** A humanitarian response led by LNAs as decision-makers and direct implementers, with enforced targets and tracking. A minimum of 50% of seats on the HCT (and other decision-making bodies) are held by LNAs.
- 3. Data Driven-** Create and fund multi-sectoral data collection platforms that inform the response and enable two-way accountability to the community. Multi-sectoral community-led needs assessments and feedback mechanisms.
- 4. Ring-Fenced Funding-** More direct funding should be ring-fenced for LNAs with increased flexibility. All (100%) of Regional and Country-based Pooled Funding (CBPF) should go exclusively and directly to LNAs, including the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) fund which should be made accessible to LNAs.

Figure 6. Bold Ideas from LNAs on the Humanitarian Reset



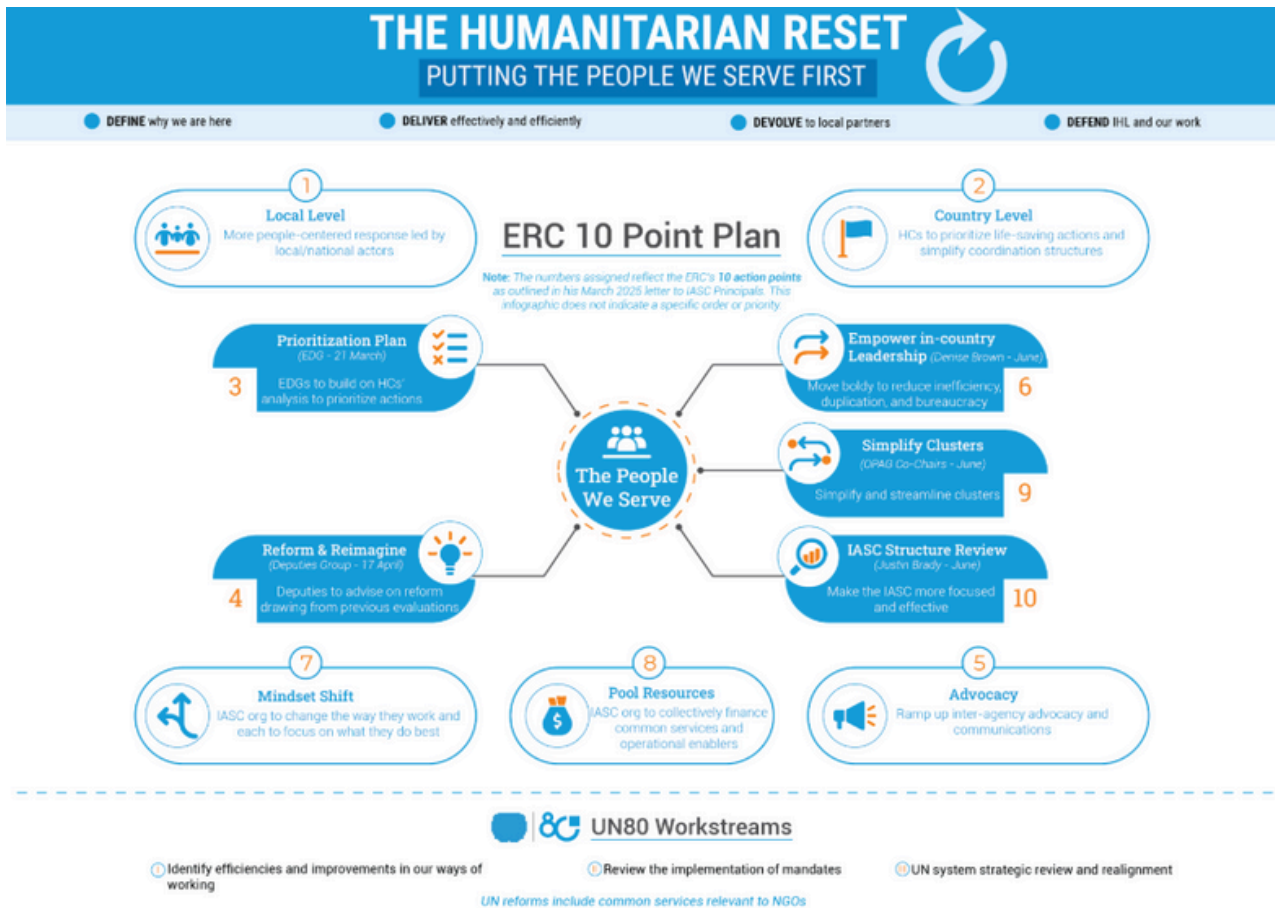
These transformational ideas that have come out for both the LNA survey responses and the Working Group 1 align closely to the statement made by Tom Fletcher when describing the purpose of the Humanitarian Reset on 11th March 2025:

“As we reprioritise, we must put people facing crises first, and provide as much funding as possible to local and national actors. As agreed, I am asking HCs to prioritise local and national partners for funding from pooled funds. We should shift towards cash-transfer programming where possible, in line with Grand Bargain Commitments, and accelerate joint inter-agency community feedback to improve our accountability. OCHA will lead a swift assessment on how country-based pooled funds and the emergency fund (CERF) can be strategically aligned with the Humanitarian Reset.” **Tom Fletcher, Emergency Relief Coordinator & Chair of the IASC.**

4.2 Broader Learning for the Humanitarian Reset

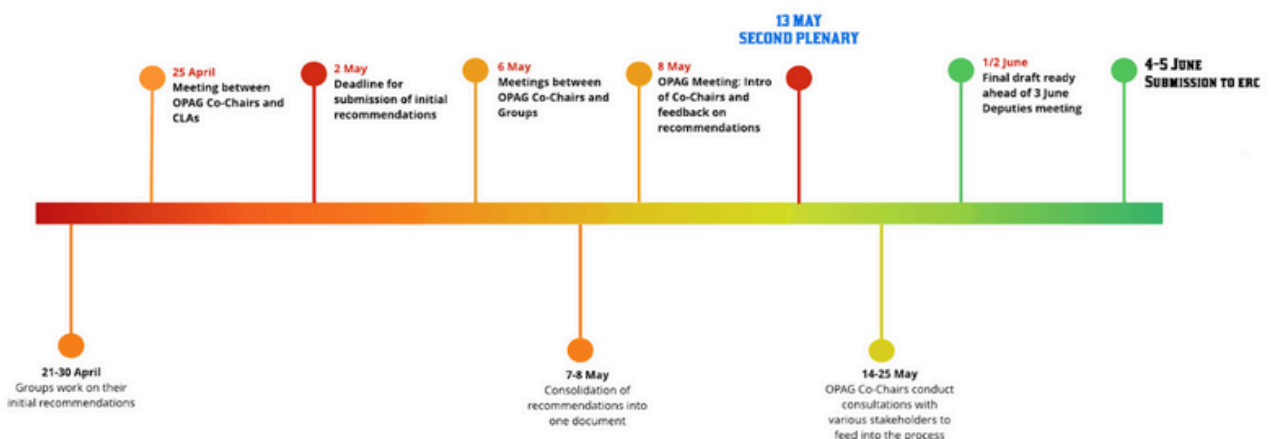
Although this survey intended to gather feedback from active LNA cluster members, for the purpose of informing WG 1, there are wider learnings. Simplifying humanitarian clusters is just one of ten different planned steps that make up the Humanitarian Reset process.

Figure 7. Overview of the Humanitarian Reset [Source IASC Website]



With the initial phase of the Humanitarian Reset process coming to a close, the next phase plans to engage a wide range of stakeholders to consult and operationalise on the transformational ideas that have been generated by each group, between 14th-25th May 2025. It should be ensured that LNAs are part of this consultation in a meaningful way, across all of the ten Humanitarian Reset Workstreams. This sentiment was echoed by the majority of the 1,046 LNA respondents, captured by one who asserted that every reset group should have “a LNA co-chair and multiple LNA members, with equal speaking and decision-making authority.” For the Humanitarian Reset process to be truly transformational, LNAs in collaboration with affected communities must decide how the system works best to support them.

Figure 8. Humanitarian Reset on Cluster Reform Timeline, 30th April 2025



The Humanitarian Reset process asked LNAs for their opinions. They have responded boldly and need to be heard to inform both decision-making and how this process continues to engage local voices to change the humanitarian system to be more people-centred and locally-led. Localisation does not happen in the absence of LNAs.

This report was compiled on behalf of the Humanitarian Reset Working Group 1, under the Humanitarian Reset Workstream 9, Simplify Clusters, by:

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Acknowledgement

This report would not have been possible without the efforts of the 1,046 LNA representatives that dedicated their time to completing the survey and sharing their thoughts and opinions. We thank you for your valuable insights.



Annex 1 Survey Questionnaire

Q1: Which region is your organisation based in?

Q2: Which country / context does your organisation operate in? [If your country is not in this list then please select OTHER and write the name of your country]

Q3: Which type of organisation do you represent?

Q4: Which statement best describes your organisation?

Q5: Select all of the clusters or Area of Responsibilities that your organisation participates in

Q6: Please rank these ideas from a Localisation perspective on which ones you think would be the most transformational to the humanitarian system Put your most transformational ideas first at the top [Please rank these ideas in your order of preference by dragging the options or using the arrows to move them up and down the list].

- **Require leadership from local and national actors**, e.g., through co-coordination or co-leadership in humanitarian coordination and action from the onset of an emergency response or within 3 - 6 months of an existing emergency. Cluster Lead Agencies provide capacity sharing and support to these roles. The local and national actor leadership of the cluster strategic advisory groups (SAGs) should be representative of the percentage make-up of the cluster.
- **Local and National actors co-lead the monitoring of the transformational actions from the Humanitarian Reset.** A localisation scorecard is created for country-level operations to track progress on national ownership and power-sharing. The humanitarian coordination system's progress is reported to the Humanitarian Coordinator on a quarterly basis with targets.
- **Local and national actors should be the primary recipients of Country-Based Pooled Funding (CBPF)** and receive the funds directly. Additionally, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) should be opened up to all humanitarian actors, including local and national actors, with a percentage reserved for LNAs. All humanitarian funding includes a set percentage for unrestricted.
- **Reduce inequalities in partnerships:** International Actors should commit to passing on the same flexibility that donors give them to the local and national actors with whom they partner. Additionally, international actors work with donors to ensure that local and national actors have more direct access to humanitarian funding.
- **Time-bound Cluster Activation & Transition Planning:** Clusters should have a time-bound activation process with a focus on transition planning and strengthening national capacity and leadership. International Cluster Coordinators (CCs) should be deployed for short-term surge capacity, transitioning leadership to national actors after the initial 3-6 months.
- **Mandate inclusion of local organisations**—especially women, and youth-led organisations and organisations of persons with disabilities—in all funding and decision-making mechanisms, with representation targets and compliance tied to funding eligibility. As part of this process, LNAs should be involved in fund distribution and monitoring.
- **Focus on area-based coordination led by local and national actors**, with multi sectoral responses driven by local expertise. This should be rooted in community realities and informed by affected populations' priorities, promoting inclusivity, flexibility, and accountability.

Q7: Please rank these ideas from a People-Centred Approach perspective on which ones you think would be the most transformational to the humanitarian system. Put your most transformational ideas first at the top [Please rank these ideas in your order of preference by dragging the options or using the arrows to move them up and down the list].

- **Local Communities should actively engage** in all cluster processes from the start. Whether that is during the planning of a needs assessment, initial consultation on a strategy process, or reprioritisation of the HNRP. No decisions without representation
- Apply a **system-strengthening approach** from the onset of the response, including mapping out relevant country stakeholders (with capacity and duty to assess needs, deliver services, develop/enforce policy/legal frameworks) and reinforcing their capacity to deliver against those functions.
- Humanitarian action to prioritise **locally led cash responses**, which are more efficient and empower crisis-affected people to make their own choices.
- Emphasise **common, independent feedback mechanisms** over individual agency community feedback mechanisms: Ensure all feedback mechanisms are accessible, accountable, and inclusive.
- Shift **operational planning to be multi-sector** and area-based, better reflecting the priorities of communities (rather than dividing priorities sector-by-sector).
- Development of common '**people-centred**' **indicators** for measuring progress, designed by affected populations themselves

Q8: We want to hear your ideas. What do you think the humanitarian system could do to better to ensure the multisectoral needs of affected people are identified, and that the assistance is safe, inclusive, localised and meets their needs? [Maximum of 3 answers]

Q9: We are looking for feedback on how local and national actors would prefer to be engaged in the Humanitarian Reset process going forward. [Please rank these ideas in your order of preference by dragging the options or using the arrows to move them up and down the list].

- Local and National Actors should be represented in the Humanitarian Reset conversations by a **network** that represents them at either national, regional or global levels
- **Focus group discussions** with a selection of local and national actors at the **global level** with the Humanitarian Reset Team
- **Focus group discussions at the country level** with Humanitarian Country Teams
- **Survey** to get wider inputs at key decision points of the process [similar surveys to this]

Q10: Based on your answer to the previous question, are there any other ways that you think local and national actors should be engage during the Humanitarian Reset process?

Annex 2 Local & National Actor Advocacy Papers

Humanitarian Reset: A Call for Transformative Change- Joint statement from civil society representatives in response to Emergency Relief Coordinator Tom Fletcher's announcement of the 'Humanitarian Reset' initiative

Annex 3 Survey Results Presentation to the OPAG Co-Chairs

[Link to the Survey Results Presentation](#)